

APPLICANT PREPARATION GUIDE FOR THE POST ENTRY-LEVEL TEST BATTERY

PREPARING FOR THE MULTIPLE-CHOICE AND CLOZE EXAMS

There are many different types of tests. Two kinds of tests that most of us are familiar with are achievement tests and aptitude tests. Achievement tests measure what you know about some specific thing. A final exam in college is an example of an achievement test. In a final exam, the student is evaluated on how well he or she has mastered the curriculum of the class. Aptitude tests are quite different; they are tests for determining the probability of a person's success in some activity in which he or she is not yet trained. A college entrance test, such as the SAT, is an example of an aptitude test. In reality, achievement tests and aptitude tests occupy the end points of a continuum of test type for all tests are a little of each. It is important to know the distinction between the two types of tests is because, in general, you can study to improve your score on an achievement test, but there is only a limited amount of study and preparation that you can do for an aptitude test.

The POST Test-Battery is primarily a language aptitude test. As such, there is some improvement in test score that can be achieved by preparation, but how you do on the test is primarily determined by how much language skill you presently possess. Language skills develop over a lifetime and tend to be very stable. Noticeable improvement in language skills typically takes a prolonged, intense effort. Most people require several semesters of college level work to appreciably improve their reading or writing levels.

We have developed this test preparation guide so that you can be as prepared as possible to take the test. In this guide, we will explain exactly what is tested in the exam, we will provide you with a short, sample test to practice on, and we will provide you with what we believe to be the best strategies for answering test questions.

WHAT THE TEST BATTERY MEASURES

Focusing exclusively on language ability, the test battery is comprised of two components: one evaluates writing ability and the other reading ability. The writing component of the test measures clarity, vocabulary, and spelling, and the reading component measures reading comprehension.

Writing Ability

Each of the three writing sub-tests is 15 items in length. The clarity sub-test has the test-taker identify which of two sentences is correctly written. As the segment name implies, this section is intended to measure the test-taker's ability to identify clear writing. Typical incorrect sentences manifest problems with unclear reference, misplaced modifiers, fragments, run-ons, etc. No uncommon sentence faults are included.

The spelling sub-test utilizes a standard four choice multiple-choice format. A sentence is given with one word omitted. A straight line of approximately 1-inch indicates the location of the omitted word. Four alternative spellings of the same word are given. The alternative spellings are arrayed under the item.

The vocabulary sub-test also uses a standard four choice multiple-choice format. One word in a sentence is underlined and the test-taker is instructed to select the alternative that is the most accurate synonym or definition. Words are included in the spelling and vocabulary tests that are likely to be encountered in law enforcement work but which are not law enforcement specific or learned in training or on the job.

Reading Ability

Two types of reading comprehension tests are utilized. One is comprised of a 20-item read-a-passage, answer-a-question, multiple-choice test, and the other is a 40-item cloze test. The multiple-choice test utilizes passages which were taken from a variety of sources and which vary in length from a single paragraph to a page. Some come directly from law enforcement materials, others are non-law enforcement narratives. Neither test requires any prior law enforcement knowledge in order to correctly answer the questions or complete the blanks.

The cloze test is comprised of a passage with 40 words deleted. The first and last sentences of the passage are left intact. Between the first and last sentences, every seventh word is systematically deleted from the text. No word is deleted that cannot be deduced from context. A dashed line is presented where a word has been deleted, with the number of dashes indicating the number of letters in the deleted word. The test-taker must insert a word where one is deleted. The word must come from the test-taker's vocabulary as no alternative words or lists of words are presented in the test. A word is considered correct if it is syntactically correct and semantically appropriate--it must be the right part of speech and it must make sense in the passage. In some instances, there is more than one correct response, in others only one word can correctly fill the blank. Where more than one word is correct in a blank, the you will get credit for any correct answers that you identify.

The cloze test is printed in a separate, disposable test booklet. It is intended that you actually write in the deleted words thus providing you with a more complete "picture" of the textual material being interpreted. You are instructed to write and then code your answer onto a scannable answer sheet the first letter of every word that you chose.

PRACTICE TEST

The following shortened version of the test is provided to introduce you to the directions and types of items that you will encounter on the actual test. Familiarity with the structure and content of the test should reduce any anxiety that you might have regarding what to expect on the exam. The covers of the test, as well as all instructions and directions, have been presented exactly as they appear on actual tests. Following each practice sub-test, the keyed responses are provided along with an explanation of why the other choices are incorrect. For item formats where test-taking strategies can improve your score, the strategies have been presented.

ENTRY-LEVEL LAW ENFORCEMENT TEST BATTERY

TEST BOOK A



CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON
PEACE OFFICER STANDARDS AND TRAINING
1601 ALHAMBRA BOULEVARD
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95816-7083

DO NOT TURN THIS PAGE UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO

CONTROL NUMBER _____

WRITING SKILLS TEST

The Writing Test is comprised of a 45-item multiple-choice examination. This test measures three aspects of good writing: clarity, vocabulary, and spelling.

Remember to make all responses to test questions on the answer sheet. Make no marks in the test booklet.

Suggestions for Taking the Test

Be sure you mark the space on your answer sheet that has the same number as the question in the test booklet.

Keep your answer sheet on a hard surface while you are marking an answer.

Firmly press down the pencil point until you completely darken the circle on the answer sheet. Do not use any other means of marking your answer sheet.

If you wish to change your answer, you may do so, but be sure to erase your first answer completely.

It is to your advantage to answer **all** questions. If it takes an unreasonable amount of time to answer a question, it is better to skip it and go back to it after the other questions have been answered.

Read and consider all choices to each question before deciding which one is correct.

CLARITY

Instructions:

In the following pairs of sentences, identify the sentence which is most clearly written. If sentence "A" is clearer than sentence "B", mark "A" on your answer sheet. If sentence "B" is more clear than sentence "A", mark "B" on your answer sheet. Make no marks in the test booklet.

1. A. The officer was hoping to get a new partner, one that had a great deal of experience.
 B. The officer was hoping to get a new partner. One that had a great deal of experience.
2. A. Bullet fragments were gathered by officers in envelopes.
 B. Bullet fragments were gathered in envelopes by officers.
3. A. The suspect disliked the officer as did the judge.
 B. The suspect disliked the officer as much as the judge.
4. A. The officer had probable cause to arrest the suspect when he arrived at the scene.
 B. When the officer arrived at the scene, he had probable cause to arrest the suspect.
5. A. Jail is not a pleasant place to be, but they do get their basic necessities met.
 B. Jail is not a pleasant place to be, but prisoners do get their basic necessities met.

Correct Answers:

1,A; 2, B; 3, A; 4,B; 5,B

Explanation of Incorrect Alternatives:

In item #1, alternative "B" is incorrect because "One that had a great deal of experience" is a sentence fragment.

In item #2, alternative "A" is incorrect because it contains a misplaced modifier. The way this sentence is written, the officers collecting the bullet fragments were themselves in the envelope.

In item #3, alternative "B" is incorrect because it is confusing and ambiguous. Does the suspect dislike both the officer and the judge, or does the judge dislike the officer as much as does the suspect? One can't tell the way the sentence is written.

In item #4, alternative "A" is incorrect because it has an unreferenced pronoun. The way the pronoun "he" is used in this sentence makes it unclear if "he" is referring to the officer or the suspect.

In item #5, alternative "A" is incorrect because the pronoun "they" does not refer to an antecedent noun. In sentence "B", the proper noun "prisoners" makes the sentence clear.

Things to study:

This is the only sub-test where studying can markedly improve your test score. The clarity test measures your ability to identify clear, as opposed to unclear, writing. The writing faults that are included in this test relate to modification, reference and sentence boundaries. No obscure writing faults are included. To maximize your test score, you should review the rules regarding:

1. Modification

Example 1:

- A. "In rural areas, more deer are killed by automobiles than by hunters."
- B. "In rural areas, automobiles kill more deer than hunters."

Explanation:

"A" is clearly written. The reader knows that more deer are killed by automobiles than are killed by hunters. "B" is an example of improper modification. The way the sentence is written automobiles are killing both deer and hunters.

Example 2:

- A. Beginning to run before stretching is frequently the cause of shin splints.
- B. Beginning to run before stretching frequently is the cause of shin splints.

Explanation:

"A" is correctly written. The reader knows that beginning to run before stretching can frequently cause shin splints. "B" is written incorrectly. The way this sentence is worded, "frequently" incorrectly modifies stretching thus causing confusion or error.

2. Vague or Indefinite Reference:

Example 1:

- A. The next time Mary was in town, she agreed to have lunch with Sue.
- B. Mary agreed to have lunch with Sue the next time she was in town.

Explanation:

"A" is clearly written. The reader knows who is having lunch, with whom, and when. "B" suffers from an ambiguous reference. The sentence is ambiguous because the way it is worded does not make clear whether Mary will have lunch with Sue the next time Mary is in town or the next time Sue is in town.

Example 2:

- A. The child wanted everything he saw advertised in commercials, even though he didn't know exactly what the toys were.
- B. The child wanted everything he saw advertised in the commercials, even though he didn't know exactly what they were.

Explanation:

"A" is clearly written. The reader knows that what were advertised in the commercials were toys. Choice "B" is incorrect because the "they" at the end of the sentence is unreferenced. The reader does not know what was in the commercials that the child wanted.

Run-on Sentences:

Example 1:

- A. The necessary revisions have been made by the author and the manuscript is now ready to be printed. The publicist can begin developing the advertising campaign.
- B. The necessary revisions have been made by the author and the manuscript is now ready to be printed the publicist can begin developing the advertising campaign.

Explanation:

Sentence "A" is correctly written. Sentence "B" is a run-on because it consists of two complete sentences that are not separated by either a semi-colon, a period, or a comma and a coordinating conjunction.

Sentence Fragments:

- A. The position requires that the incumbent type, file and prepare travel expense claims in addition to acting as the receptionist for the organization.
- B. The position requires that the incumbent type, file and prepare travel expense claims. In addition to acting as the receptionist for the organization.

Explanation

Sentence "A" is correctly written. Sentence "B" is incorrect because the phrase "in addition to acting as the receptionist for the organization" is not a complete sentence.

VOCABULARY

Instructions

In each of the following sentences, choose the word or phrase that most nearly has the same meaning as the underlined word.

Mark on your answer sheet the letter that identifies the correct choice.

1. The witness corroborated the suspect's story.
 - a. verified
 - b. contradicted
 - c. added to
 - d. questioned
2. It was not a very pragmatic plan.
 - a. plausible
 - b. serious
 - c. practical
 - d. sensible
3. The police sequestered the suspect.
 - a. caught
 - b. isolated
 - c. arrested
 - d. released
4. In order to conceal her guilt, Linda told a blatant lie.
 - a. harmless
 - b. subtle
 - c. careless
 - d. obvious
5. He was ignorant of the proper procedures.
 - a. unaware
 - b. conscious
 - c. uncertain
 - d. cognizant

Correct Answers:

1,A; 2, C; 3, B; 4, D; 5, A

Explanation of Incorrect Alternatives:

In item #1:

verify means to corroborate, confirm, or attest to
contradict means to express the opposite
added to means to augment
question means to cast doubt on

In item #2

plausible means apparently valid or likely
serious means earnest or sincere
practical means pragmatic
sensible means reasonable or wise

In item #3

caught means to seize or trap
isolate means to sequester
arrest means to seize or bring into custody
release means to let go

In item #4

harmless means not harmful, inoffensive
subtle means not obvious
careless means done without care or concern
obvious means blatant

In item #5

unaware means ignorant
conscious means aware
uncertain means having questions regarding
cognizant means aware

Things to study:

The best way to improve your vocabulary is to read, read, read and read some more. It is only through using and interacting with language that we develop any real mastery of it. To learn words in isolation is very difficult. We can study word lists and attempt to memorize them, but this tends to be less than optimal as a means of improving vocabulary. Words will be remembered for awhile and then forgotten. We can also study the Latin and Greek roots, prefixes, and suffices on which many of our English words are based. Research has not demonstrated, however, a substantial carry over between learning these roots, prefixes, and suffices and actually improving one's vocabulary. Thus, there is probably not much that you can do to improve your vocabulary in the short run. Any real improvement will come only after extensive reading.

This said, it is useful and interesting to see how words can be built from roots, prefixes, and suffices. [\[Hyperlink to "Roots, Prefixes, and Suffices\]](#)Click here to see some of the more common roots, prefixes, and suffices and some of the words that are built using them.

Roots	Meaning	Example
bas	low	basement, debase
bio	life	biology, biopsy
cent	hundred	century, centipede
dec	ten	decade, decimal
ego	I	egoism, egomaniac
equ	equal	equity, equanimity
fort	strong	fortitude, fortify

graph	write	autograph, graphic
loc	place	location, dislocate
mort	death	mortal, mortician
ped	child	pediatrician, pedagogy
phob	fear	claustrophobia, homophobia
poten	powerful	impotent, potentate
soph	wisdom	philosophy, sophisticated
term	end	terminate, terminal
urb	city	suburban, urban

Prefixes	Meaning	Example
anti	against	antidote, antislavery
in, il, im, ir	not	indiscrete, illegal, impossible, irresponsible
inter	among, between	intercede, interject
non	not	nonconformist, nonentity
re	back	recur
pre	before	precede, preempt
sub	under	subvert, submarine
trans	across	transmit, transcend
un	not	un-american, unaware

Suffices	Meaning	Example
ance, ence	state of	indulgence, abundance
ate	one who	candidate, advocate
il, ile	capable of being	evil, servile
ness	quality of	willingness, shrewdness
ory	a place for	factory, depository
some	characteristic of	loathsome, fearsome

Test strategies:

1. Put the word in context.

If you do not know the word itself, attempt to figure out the meaning based on the meaning of the sentence in which it is used.

2. Be aware of subtle differences in meaning.

There will be occasions when two words seem to be correct. Before making your decision regarding which word to indicate as the correct choice, attempt to identify the differences between the words. This will help you decide which word is most correct in the context in which it is presented in the test.

SPELLING

Instructions

In the following sentences, choose the correct spelling of the missing word. Mark on your answer sheet the letter that identifies the correct choice.

1. His _____ of the situation was incorrect.
 - a. analisys
 - b. annalysis
 - c. analysis
 - d. anallysys

2. It was not _____ who committed the crime.
 - a. apparent
 - b. apperant
 - c. aparent
 - d. aperant

3. She was a _____ worker.
 - a. conscienteous
 - b. consceintious
 - c. consceinteous
 - d. conscientious

4. She did not actually _____ the stolen goods.
 - a. receive
 - b. recieve
 - c. receve
 - d. recive

5. There was only one witness to the boy's _____.
 - a. abducton
 - b. abducision
 - c. abduction
 - d. abduckion

Correct Answers:

1,C; 2,A; 3, D; 4, A; 5, C

Things to study:

It is difficult to prepare for the spelling portion of the test. There were no specific word lists utilized to identify the words that comprise the spelling test and, therefore, no specific words to study. The words that comprise the test are words that could likely find themselves in police reports or in the other writing done by officers.

There are rules that govern spelling, but they are many and complex. For a presentation of the more common rules, click here.

(begin click)

The following includes just a few of the more important rules that govern spelling. The complete set of rules that govern spelling is quite extensive. Also, there are numerous exceptions to the rules.

1. Prefixes

A prefix is a syllable or syllables added to the beginning of a word to change its meaning. The word prefix means "to fix to the beginning of a word." A prefix does not change the spelling of the original word, it is simply added to the beginning of that word.

Examples:

dis approve, *dis* continue, *mis* understand, *over* extend, *un* happy.

2. Suffixes

A suffix is a syllable or syllables added to the end of a word to change its meaning. Suffix is defined as meaning "a letter, syllable, or group of syllables added at the end of a word or word base to change its meaning."

There are a number of rules that govern spelling when adding a suffix.

- A. When adding the suffix *ness* or *ly*, don't change the spelling of the base word. However, when the root word ends in *y*, the *y* is usually changed to *i* before the *ly* or *ness*.

Examples: sure, *surely*; cool, *coolness*; happy *happily*; friendly *friendliness*.

- B. When a one syllable word ends in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel, you double the consonant before adding *ing*, *ed*, *er*, *est*.

Examples: wrap, *wrapping*; tap, *tapped*; big, *biggest*.

- B. When a word with more than one syllable ends in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel, and when the accent is on the last syllable, double the consonant before adding *ing*, *ed*.

Examples: occur, *occurring*; submit, *submitted*.

- D. When a word ends in a consonant followed by a silent *e*, drop the *e* before adding *ing*.

Examples: hide, *hiding*; save, *saving*.

- E. When a word ends in *y* preceded by a consonant, keep the *y* before adding *ing*. When adding either *es* or *ed*, change the *y* to *i*.

Examples: cry, *crying*; cry *cries*; cry, *cried*.

3. Plural forms of nouns

- A. To form the plural form of most nouns, add *s*.

Examples: truck, trucks; cat, cats.

- B. To form the plural form of nouns ending in *s*, *x*, *z*, *ch*, or *sh*, add *es*

Examples: box, boxes; patch, patches; fox, foxes.

- C. To form the plural form of nouns ending in a consonant plus *y*, change the *y* to *i* and add *es*.

Examples: county, counties; cherry, cherries.

- D. To form the plural form of nouns ending in a vowel plus *y*, add *s*.

Examples: turkey, turkeys; boy, boys.

- E. To form the plural form of nouns ending consonant plus *o*, add *es*.

Examples: tomato, tomatoes; veto, vetoes.

- F. To form the plural form of nouns ending in a vowel plus *o*, add *s*.

Examples: rodeo, rodeos; stereo, stereos.

4. "I" and "E" Rule:

The general rule is that *i* precedes *e* (e.g., believe etc.) except after *c* when *e* precedes *i* (e.g., receive).

THE MULTIPLE-CHOICE READING COMPREHENSION TEST

Instructions

Officers must read and understand a wide range of materials. This test is designed to measure your ability to read and understand various types of written material. Read each paragraph or passage and choose the statement which best answers the question. All questions pertain only to the material in the passage which precedes them. Therefore, you are to choose your answer solely on the basis of the material contained in the passage. Mark the letter which identifies your choice in the space on your answer sheet. Do not spend too much time on any one item.

1. The case of Gideon v. Wainwright, decided by the Supreme Court in 1962, granted court-appointed counsel to people charged with felonies who could not afford to pay for their own attorneys. In a more recent case, the Supreme Court declared that the right extends to persons who are charged with any crime for which prison is a potential penalty. According to these court decisions, a defendant may waive his or her right to be represented by counsel at trial, but the state must at least provide the defendant with the opportunity to have free counsel.

Based on the above passage, which of the following statements is most correct regarding defendants who cannot afford an attorney

- a. anyone who must appear in court has the right to a free attorney
 - b. anyone whose charges may result in prison must have an attorney representing him or her at trial
 - c. anyone charged with a felony must have an attorney present for his or her trial
 - d. anyone charged with an offence that could lead to prison must have the option of a free attorney*
2. During the 1970s rural America registered a population gain of almost 14 percent, while metropolitan growth was just under 10 percent. The surprising spurt in rural growth had nothing to do, however, with prolific reproduction. On the contrary, rural areas were mired in aging townsfolk. This fact, combined with trend toward smaller families, actually resulted in a 10 percent decline in the existing rural population between 1965 and 1970. Newcomers more than made up for that loss. The latest census tells us that one sixth of the U.S. population now lives in rural areas and 40 percent of all new housing in the 1970s was built on rural land. The rural areas are now growing faster than the metropolitan areas for the first time since the early 1800s.

Based on the preceding passage, which of the following statements is most accurate?

- a. Rural areas were mired in aging townsfolk because the young and farmers were immigrating to the cities.
 - b. There has been more than a 10 percent increase of newcomers to rural areas.*
 - c. The overall gain in the American population was almost 14 percent.
 - d. The trend toward small families contributed to the decrease in the urban population growth rate.
3. Entrapment is defined as officers or agents of the government provoking a person to commit a crime that he did not originally contemplate in order to prosecute him. The goal of law enforcement is not to encourage nor to create an offense, but to prevent people from committing crimes and/or arrest people when they do commit offenses.

Based on the preceding passage, which of the following statements describes an instance of entrapment?

- a. Property that has been marked by police so that they can trace it at a later time.
 - b. A victim, learning that a person intends to rob him, does nothing to stop the crime, but instead allows the robber to carry through with the crime so that police will catch him in the act.
 - c. A door to a warehouse containing valuable merchandise is purposely left open by police.*
 - d. An undercover officer approaches a known drug dealer and tries, unsuccessfully, to purchase drugs.
4. Community policing has gained increased acceptance during the past 10 years. The community policing model places service to the public and prevention of crime as the primary role of police in society and emphasizes problem solving, with active citizen involvement in defining those matters that are important

to the community, rather than crime fighting and arrest statistics. Officers at the patrol level are required to spend less time in their cars communicating with other officers and more time on the street communicating with citizens. Proponents of this style of policing insist that addressing the causes of crime makes police officers more effective and at the same time enhances the quality of life in the neighborhood. Community policing concepts, if successfully implemented, offer the prospect of effective crime prevention and substantially improved community relations. Although community-based policing is not a panacea for the problems of crime in society, it does offer valuable opportunity to both reduce crime and enhance the police image.

1. According to the preceding passage, which of the following statements is most accurate?
 - a. Community policing is expected to increase the number of arrests made by patrol officers.
 - b. Implementing community policing is expected to decrease the amount of crime.*
 - c. Community policing is not designed to lessen crime.
 - d. The community policing model defers decision-making to citizens and community members.

5. GENERAL ORDER 62 (Radio Codes)

The purpose of this general order is to describe the coding system that identifies the various departmental and non-departmental units. Below you will find three components of police radio codes (A, B, and C). When a dispatcher sends officers out on a call, these 3 code components are used.

Each call number shall be comprised of three components:

1. the first digit identifies shift
2. the alpha digit describes the operational assignment
3. the last two digits identifies unit or area

A. Call numbers shall be assigned as follows:

Shift designation

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1 | day |
| 2 | swing |
| 3 | graveyard |

B. Operational assignments

- A. patrol division, platoon 1
- B. patrol division, platoon 2
- C. patrol division, special activities
- D. patrol division, gang unit
- E. traffic division, motorcycle unit 1
- F. traffic division, motorcycle unit 2
- G. traffic division, administration
- H. investigation division, fraud
- I. investigation division, drugs

J. administration division

C. Unit or Area

1-13 Metropolitan area

13-20 Airport

21-40 Industrial parks

41-45 Residential areas

Using the above coding system, the call number 2-B-12 would identify

- a. swing shift, platoon 2, metropolitan area
- b. graveyard, platoon 1, airport
- c. swing shift, administration, residential
- d. day, traffic unit 1, airport

Correct Answers:

1,D; 2, B; 3, C; 4, B; 5, A

Explanation of Incorrect Alternatives:

Item #1: Alternative "A" is incorrect because it states that "anyone who must appear in court has the right to a free attorney" while the text states that "persons who are charged with any crime for which prison is a potential penalty" have a right to a free attorney.

Alternative "B" is incorrect because it states that "anyone...must have an attorney representing him at trial." The passage, however, states that "a defendant may waive his or her right to be represented."

Alternative "C" is incorrect because it states that "anyone charged with a felony must be represented for his trial" while the passage only addresses individuals charged with a crime "for which prison is a potential penalty."

Item #2: Alternative "A" is incorrect because the passage says nothing about "the young and farmers ...immigrating to the cities."

Alternative "C" is incorrect because the distractor states that there was an "overall gain in the American population", but the passage speaks about rural and metropolitan growth, not overall growth.

Alternative "D" is incorrect because the passage states that the trend toward smaller families resulted in a "decline in the existing rural population", while the distractor talks about a trend toward smaller families affecting urban growth.

Item #3: Alternative "A" does not constitute entrapment because there is no government provocation to steal the marked items.

Alternative "B" is not entrapment because the activity described is undertaken by a "victim", not by the government.

Alternative "D" is not entrapment because the officer is not provoking an individual to commit a crime that they were not already contemplating committing.

Item #4: Alternative "A" is incorrect because community policing is not focused primarily on enhancing arrest statistics but rather "places service to the public and prevention of crime as the primary role of police in society."

Alternative "C" is incorrect because community policing is intended to lessen crime. Unlike traditional policing, however, this goal is to be achieved through crime prevention, not crime fighting.

Alternative "D" is incorrect because decision-making is not deferred to the citizens and the community. Community policing does, however, stress "active citizen involvement in defining those matters that are important to the community."

Item #5: Alternatives "B", "C", and "D" are immediately recognized as incorrect because the last element of the code (12) refers to the metropolitan area, and only one of the choices, "A", meets this condition.

Test strategies:

Strategy 1: Read the question and the alternative responses before reading the passage.

The issue of whether to read the passage or the question first is debated. Some contend that the passage should be read carefully before the question and alternative answers. Such a tactic, however, inevitably requires the reader to go back to the passage after reading the passage and question. It also precludes the reader from reading with a purpose or a goal, both of which improves reading efficiency. I favor reading the question and alternative answers first, and then reading the passage. This strategy has the advantage of having the test-taker read the passage while looking for specific information (the information that will answer the question that he or she already knows, and which identifies one of the known alternative choices as being correct).

Strategy 2: Don't answer a question based on your opinions or knowledge; answer the question based on what is in the passage.

The reading passages come from a variety of sources, and they address a variety of topics. In all instances, however, all of the information needed to answer the question is contained in the passage. In answering the questions, be guided by the information contained in the passage, not on other information that you possess or on opinions that you may hold.

Strategy 3: Read the question very carefully.

It is very unlikely that you will identify the correct answer if you have misread the question.

NAME: _____
(Last) (First) (MI)

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER ____ -- ____ -- ____

TEST LOCATION _____

DATE _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)

ENTRY-LEVEL LAW ENFORCEMENT TEST BATTERY
TEST BOOK B
220



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PEACE OFFICER STANDARDS AND TRAINING
1601 ALHAMBRA BOULEVARD
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95816-7083
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CONTROL NUMBER _____

CLOZE READING TEST

This is a test of how well you can read. The test is completed by supplying missing words in sentences and then coding those words on your answer sheet.

Every place you see a dashed blank line, you have to supply the correct word. Notice that there are different numbers of dashes in each blank space. The dashes tell you how many letters make up the word that has been deleted. For a word to be scored as being correct, it must make sense in the passage and it must have the same number of letters as there are dashes. All words that meet these two conditions will be scored as being correct.

For example, a sentence in the test might read, "**The driver was injured when his 1) _ _ _ crashed into the tree.**" You would complete the sentence by printing "**CAR**" in the blank space provided: "**The driver was injured when his 1) C A R crashed into the tree.**" The word **B U S** could have been used, as it both makes sense in the blank space, and has the proper number of letters. The words **truck**, **auto** and **vehicle** are incorrect, because, even though they make sense in the blank, they have the wrong number of letters. There were three dashes in the blank space, therefore, only words with three letters can be used. Also, only one word has been deleted in each blank space, so make sure that you put only one word in each blank space with a dashed line.

Once you have completed the passage, you then code your answers onto Page 2, side 2 of the answer sheet. On Page 2, you will find the alphabet printed many times. Each numbered column represents one item. To code a word on the answer sheet, write the **FIRST LETTER** of the word that you wrote in the blank, in the box directly under the appropriate item number. Then, blacken the circle in the column of letters that is the same as the letter you wrote in the box. **ONLY THE RESPONSES CODED ON YOUR ANSWER SHEET WILL BE SCORED, SO MAKE SURE YOU CODE YOUR ANSWERS CORRECTLY.** As you are coding your answer sheet, check to ensure that:

- the item number on the answer sheet, where you are coding your responses, corresponds with the item number in the passage.
- you have written the correct letter in the box.
- you have blackened the correct circle below the box.

The sample paragraph on the following page demonstrates how the coding is done.

First, complete the blanks.

The juvenile justice system encounters many types of people. Here is one example.

Mary was 15 when 1) _ _ _ was first arrested. Mary was a popular girl. 2) _ _ the time of her first arrest, 3) _ _ _ was doing well in school. According to

4) _ _ _ teacher, she was a hard working 5) _ _ _ _ _ _ and made excellent grades.

Mary also had 6) _ good attitude toward school. Mary lived with her parents 7) _ _ a middle class neighborhood.

Acceptable words for the above example are: 1) she, 2) at, 3) she, 4) her, 5) student, 6) a, and 7) in.

Then, code the answers on the answer sheet.

PAGE 2 — SIDE 2 THIS PAGE IS FOR CODING RESPONSES TO TEST BOOK B

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10										11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20										21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30										31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40									
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WRITE 1ST LETTER OF WORD HERE →

CODE LETTERS HERE →

The ability to write clear, well-developed reports is a necessary prerequisite to being a good law enforcement officer. Writing good 1)_____, however, has been, and continues to 2)_____ one

of the primary weaknesses of 3)_____ officers. Writing skills can be improved 4)_____ through raising entrance standard, improving training, 5)_____ a combination of the two.

Accepting 6)_____ there are limits on how high 7)_____ standards be set, one is realistically 8)_____ with training as a means of 9)_____ writing skills.

POST has developed a 10)_____ course for the basic academy that 11)_____ designed to teach

students how to 12)_____ clearly and effectively. The curriculum is 13)_____ by established principles of teaching and 14)_____. A basic premise underlying the curriculum 15)_____ that writers learn best by writing, 16)_____ by writing frequently. A second premise 17)_____ that students learn best when they 18)_____ information through more than a single 19)_____ mode.

[Correct Answers:

- 1) reports
- 2) be
- 3) many
- 4) either
- 5) or
- 6) that
- 7) entrance
- 8) left
- 9) improving
- 10) writing
- 11) is
- 12) write
- 13) guided
- 14) learning

- 15) is
- 16) and
- 17) is
- 18) receive
- 19) sensory

Test Strategy:

As can readily be seen from the list of correct words, some of the words are very easy to identify and others are considerably more difficult. On this type of test it is extremely rare for a test-taker to get all of the words correct. Therefore, you should not worry if you do not know all of the words. To do you best on this type of examination, it is important that you read through the entire passage before you write, and then continue to re-read the passage as you enter more words.

THE ESSAY EXAM

Preparing for the Law Enforcement Essay Exam

The best way to prepare for the Essay Exam is, of course, to write. This packet of information provides you with the scoring guide, a group of scored essays, and four sample essay prompts. The sample prompts should let you know what is expected of you and provide you with some samples for practice. The essay exam is a 40-minute exam, so you should practice by giving yourself timed writings. As you read the packet of "Sample Scored Essays," you should remember that typing the sample essays makes the errors and other problems more noticeable than they would be when handwritten.

If you have not written for a very long time, or if you feel that your knowledge of grammar is insecure, you might find it useful to take a writing course at a local college. A number of grammar handbooks exist, which you can locate at almost any bookstore, especially college bookstores. One very popular handbook is called *Easy Access: The Reference Handbook for Writers*, by Katherine Adams and Michael Keene (Mayfield Publishing). This text includes a good section on English as a Second Language. One caution: the study of grammar without writing practice seldom improves writing.

Why Essays Fail

Essays fall into the lower half of the scoring range for a variety of reasons. The scoring guide should make clear why essays fail. But more discussion might be helpful.

1) Some essays are difficult to follow. The writer may know what he or she means, but a reader has difficulty following. In the "Sample Scored Essays" packet, the essay with a score of 3 not only contains a number of errors, but seems to leave out details and reasons that would make the essay clearer.

2) Some essays are problemated by error, especially errors that obscure meaning. One common problem that is readily corrected is the shifting from one tense to another (e.g., "He got out of his car and then he starts to yell."). Usually, writers who take time to proofread their work can get rid of many errors.

3) Some essays do not provide sufficient relevant detail or fail to explore ideas in any depth. The general instructions for the essay exam call for a fully developed essay. Exams that are only a handwritten half page will probably not have sufficient development.

4) The prompts ask the candidates to write about a specific incident; some candidates choose, instead, to write about a more generalized situation, which misses the point of the topic (e.g., "Whenever I teach, I follow these rules."). In the "Sample Scored Essays" packet, the essay with a score of 2 exemplifies this generalized approach. The purpose in asking for a specific incident is that this task most nearly replicates the body of a police report: the prompt asks for a chronology of events and a conclusion.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Below are four practice prompts. They are typical of the kind of question you will face on the exam: these prompts ask you to write about a specific incident and then to reflect upon the experience.

These prompts are intended to test the candidates' ability to write a clear, coherent narrative--much like what one expects in good police report writing: the ability to provide ample and appropriate detail and to draw well-reasoned conclusions.

The prompts below will provide you with a good deal of practice. You should try each prompt as a timed writing experience. You should be able to use each prompt more than once if you discuss a different incident with each attempt.

1. All of us have had experiences when everything went right, when we succeeded at something we tried, in spite of odds against success.

Describe a difficult task that you carried out successfully or a difficult goal that you achieved. Explain how you went about it and what you learned from the experience of overcoming the odds.

2. Events or situations in our lives often produce unexpected responses. We may find ourselves reacting in better or worse ways than we would have thought.

Write about a time when your reactions to an event or a situation in life were not what you would have expected. Describe the event and explain how your response surprised you.

3. Write an essay about a point in your own life when you felt that you did not receive proper recognition or praise for something you did. Describe the situation, indicating what rewards you anticipated, why you expected them, and why you felt you were not properly rewarded.
4. Write about a potentially explosive situation, where tempers of the involved parties were hot. Describe the situation and explain what you did to neutralize it.

Some Specific Language Problems

In hurried, first-draft writing, most people make some errors. A few errors will not cause failure on the exam. If, however, the essay contains a large number of errors or a great variety of errors, the essay will receive a lower score.

It is important to give yourself time (at least a few minutes) to proofread your essay.

In addition to tense shifting, mentioned earlier, a number of other specific grammar or language problems need to be mastered.

- 1) Sentence fragments: groups of words that do not form a complete sentence: "Which is what I meant."
- 2) Running two sentences together without any punctuation: "We entered the house without making any noise we heard a scuffling noise from the bedroom."
- 3) Connecting two sentences with a comma: "We entered the house without making any noise, we heard a scuffling noise from the bedroom."
- 4) Loss of past tense endings: "Yesterday we reach our destination and then we call home."
- 5) Subject-verb agreement: "The boys was going to the beach that afternoon."
- 6) Spelling: Repeated spelling errors will lower the score on an essay. Writers should be able to spell commonly used words. Make a list of words that you find difficult to spell so that you can master the spelling of those specific words. Some confused spellings are the following: there/their/they're, your/you're/ its/it's, hear/here, our/are.

SCORING GUIDE

Candidates are asked, first, to narrate or describe an event or situation from personal experience or observation. In the last part of the question, they are directed to provide some sort of analysis of the experience.

RANGE OF SCORES

- 6 The "6" essay
 - responds effectively to the writing task
 - explores the issues thoughtfully and in depth
 - is coherently and logically organized and fully developed
 - has a fluent style marked by sentence variety and language control
 - is generally free from errors in mechanics, usage, and sentence structure
- 5 The "5" essay
 - responds clearly to the writing task
 - explores the issues in some depth
 - is clearly organized and well developed
 - displays some sentence variety and facility in language
 - may have a few errors in mechanics, usage, and sentence structure
- 4 The "4" essay
 - responds adequately to the writing task
 - may not explore the issues in depth
 - is adequately organized and has sufficient development
 - basic competence in mechanics, usage, and sentence structure
- 3 The "3" essay reveals weakness in one or more of the following:
 - does not clearly respond to the writing task
 - may not provide adequate development or may lack specificity
 - may be poorly organized
 - may have an accumulation of errors in mechanics, usage, and sentence
- 2 The "2" essay reveals weakness in one or more of the following:
 - may indicate confusion about the topic
 - may have weak organization or be seriously underdeveloped
 - may lack focus or demonstrate confusion about the writing task
 - may be marred by frequent errors in mechanics, usage, and sentence structure
- 1 The "1" essay
 - suggests an inability to comprehend the question
 - may be off topic
 - is unfocused or disorganized
 - is undeveloped
 - may have serious and persistent errors in mechanics, usage, and sentence structure

Each essay is read by two raters, and the raters' scores are added. A total score of 6 or below is failing. That is, an essay that receives two scores of "3" does not pass the written exam.

EXAMPLE ESSAYS

The following is a set of actual essays and the grades that they received. The essays were written in response to the following question.

Issue: We all have to make important decisions that may affect our own lives or the lives of others.

Prompt: Write about a time when you made such an important decision. Describe the issues that affected your decision and the results.

Score – 6

My present occupation is that of a manager in a large department store where I supervise a number of employees of various life experiences and maturity levels. One such employee, whom I'll call Scott, came to work for me some months ago. This was his first job and he seemed immature but in a harmless, charming way. His earnest nature compensated for his immaturity and I decided to hire him on a trial basis.

Through the months that we worked together, I could see him gaining confidence with each new project he was assigned, whether it was meeting and greeting customers or moving and merchandising new products. The improvements in his confidence and maturity were evident every week and I was taking pride in his development.

As evidence of this new pride in his ability to earn a paycheck, Scott purchased a used car and planned to make monthly payments until it was paid for. About the same time he made this purchase he was given a raise in pay. When he received his next check, he noticed a sizable increase in pay but attributed it all to his increase in hourly rate. What had happened though was that he was given more money than he was entitled to but wasn't made aware of it until he had spent it all.

The unfortunate result was that he would be docked on his next few checks a sum that would make up for the overpayment. Scott hadn't planned on such an occurrence and was not prepared to make his car payments with his amended paychecks. Scott was not in a very confusing situation and I understood this and suggested that perhaps once the payroll mess had been resolved he would still have time to make the payment. He told me he would take care of it and I assumed the matter was resolved. Much to my dismay, a few days later, Scott was caught trying to steal a very expensive bread maker, presumably so that he could sell it and make enough to settle his car payment.

I was very disappointed in him and brought this to his attention. For awhile, I even considered turning him in to the police in order to impress upon him the seriousness of his act. After some thought, I decided not to turn him in to the police.

Among my considerations affecting this decision was Scott's age and predicament. He had extended himself to buy this car when he was encouraged by me and talk of an increase in pay. Given his lack of experience with payroll procedures, he didn't understand the payroll snafu and what steps would need to be taken to correct it. His car payment was coming due and this car symbolized freedom and adulthood to him. All these contributing factors caused a somewhat immature young man to act immaturely. I recognized his confusion and predicament

and didn't think adding a permanent blemish to his record, such as a criminal offense, would benefit anyone.

Being that we had not lost any merchandise, there was no need for any formal charges. Instead, I conveyed how disappointed he had made me and I told him he would have a lot to prove to me in the future to clear his name. To demonstrate my long-term confidence in him, we arranged for an employee loan in order for him to make his car payment. In this way, it was clear I was on his side and trying to support him.

Since all this confusion has been resolved, Scott has been an exemplary employee and a benefit to all. He demonstrates to all the new employees the proper way to conduct their respective responsibilities. His trust in me is also something I feel very good about as a result of this incident. At this point, I can say that both Scott and I are better for having dealt with this situation.

Score – 5

In May of 1990, I made a decision that has changed the course of my life. I chose to return to college and pursue a degree in criminal justice. In making this decision, there were a number of critical factors which played a role in influencing me.

To provide a little background information that is important, I dropped out of school in Illinois because I didn't like it and was not doing well at all. I moved to California and began the process of looking for an occupation. A friend suggested that I take a career counseling course at University of California at Los Angeles. This proved to be the first factor influencing my decision to return to college. During the career counseling course, I was given 25 hours of aptitude and achievement tests. When I completed the tests, they were scored and evaluated by a psychologist and career counselor. When I met with the counselor to review the results, I was shocked. I had always believed myself to be athletic and not very intelligent. What the results showed was that my IQ was above average and I excelled on most of the tests. The counselor advised that I return to school and pursue a career in a "people-oriented" field since that was what I seemed to be drawn to.

After I had time to slowly review the results, I realized that I had not done well in school because I was afraid to try. It was an empowering feeling to have a completely neutral person tell me I was smart. This began what became the biggest factor in my decision to return to school--the growth of my self-confidence. I was appalled that I had let fear hold me back from trying and I resolved to see what could happen if I tried.

I enrolled in a community college and met an instructor that became another factor in my trek back to school. Dr. Meadows became my mentor and gave me my first A. I took four courses that semester and earned a 4.0 grade point average. I don't believe I have ever been as proud as I was that day. When that semester ended, Dr. Meadows encouraged me to enter a four-year college.

One of the biggest factors that influenced me to return to college was the support of my entire family. All along they encouraged me to return for my degree. When it came time for my interview with the dean of admissions, my entire family went with me and gave moral as well as physical support.

I entered college at California Lutheran University with my major as criminal justice and found that this time I loved it! I looked forward to my criminal justice classes and found that my grades reflected this. I studied more than I thought was possible and tried with every ounce of my being.

On May 15, 1993, I walked up and received my degree in criminal justice. I made it through with a grade point average of 3.85 and showed everyone (including myself) what I could do.

Score – 4

One of the most important decisions I have made within the past year was to apply for a position with the California Highway Patrol. I put a lot of thought and effort into coming to this decision. Various things in my life have helped me to pursue a career with the California Highway Patrol. I would like to elaborate on a few of these items.

Since my childhood, I have always known what is right and wrong. I have parents which have helped me learn how to and how not to treat other people. I have always felt a need to help others. Role models have also helped guide me to make the right decisions. My stepfather, who is an LAPD detective, continues to set high standards which I attempt to meet.

Sports and self-discipline have been a part of my life since age 13. I have continually sought to improve myself both physically and mentally. Football was my chosen sport through high school, martial arts and weight-lifting continue to provide me with the self-discipline I desire. Martial arts has also given me a great amount of self-esteem, which I feel is greatly needed in any career, as well as in life.

A major event took place in my life, approximately four years ago, which greatly influenced my decision to apply for a highway patrol position. I was the victim of a random violent crime. Needless to say, this changed my life as I knew it, to one of much deeper awareness for not only life, but other people in general. Another situation affects my decision. I am involved with a lady and her son. I truly want to make a better life not only for myself, but also them. To me, this is a lifetime decision and commitment.

At this point in time, I do not know the final results of my decision. I continue to pursue my goal. And with some drive, and a little luck, I will achieve my goal. If by chance my goal is not achieved, I will utilize what I have learned in pursuit of it, and turn my focus to other career choices which lie ahead of me.

Score – 3

The most important decision I made was getting an education and fulfilling that goal. When I was younger in elementary school you sometimes took school lightly and didn't think that what was being hopefully instilled in your mind you would ever need. But as you get older, you then realized that you would be responsible for your future, and the way to do that was to gain knowledge from whatever was available.

I realized that I wanted to attend college when I was around 12 or 13 years old. But before I could do that, I had to complete high school with average grades and pass the ACT

exam with a minimum score. Once I got into my junior year I took the exam to get an idea of what it was and to see how well or bad I did. I took the exam again in my senior year and did improve my score somewhat, but not to what I wanted it to be.

When I graduated from high school, I attend college and decided to major in Marketing, because of my interest in business. Making that decision was also important, relative to fact that there are many different areas of business you may concentrate on. Graduating from college, getting a good education, I think has affected my life and my family's lives as well.

Score – 2

I am currently employed as a detention officer at the immigration building in San Pedro, California. I deal with convicted felons in this facility. My duties are to supervise the movement of these people, to enforced rules and regulations, follow policies and procedures and to write a daily report. As a detention officer, I am constantly making decisions that affect the lives of the people detained in my assigned post. For instance, when dealing with the television channel selections, some times a group of five or more wants to see a particular program and another group wants to see a different program, a conflict arises which sometimes lead to a physical encounter among them. When or before a conflicts arises, I intervene and counsel them regarding the situation at hand, once I established a reasonable agreement favorable to both side, the security of my assigned post is again opeerating with eased. In my two years working in this facility, I have made important decisions that have affected not only the life of the inmates but that of a fellow officer and friends, and as a result have stablished the security and smooth operation of the facility.